

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 964

By Dickerson

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Tennessee Supreme Court Justice Frank F. Drowota III of Nashville.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of the Honorable Frank F. Drowota III, who served on the Tennessee Supreme Court for twenty-five years and was the second-longest tenured Supreme Court justice in State history; and

WHEREAS, Justice Drowota dedicated his life to serving others and giving justice to all who came before his court; and

WHEREAS, Frank Drowota was respected by his peers and a grateful public for his character, integrity, humility, and selfless, giving spirit, and he was a role model and mentor to many; and

WHEREAS, Justice Drowota was first elected to the Tennessee Supreme Court in 1980, becoming the youngest justice to ever sit on the Court, and was subsequently reelected to two full eight-year terms; and

WHEREAS, he rendered astute service to the Tennessee Supreme Court during his two terms as Chief Justice and retired from the Court in 2005 while serving in that role; and

WHEREAS, upon his retirement, the Tennessee Bar Association established the Justice Frank Drowota III Outstanding Judicial Service Award, to be given annually to a judge who demonstrates "extraordinary devotion and dedication to the improvement of the law, our legal system and the administration of justice," and named him its first recipient; and

WHEREAS, Justice Drowota began his distinguished career on the bench in 1970, when he was appointed as the youngest chancellor of the Davidson County Chancery Court at the

age of thirty-one; he served on the Tennessee Court of Appeals from 1974-1980, when he was elected to the Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, a strong, yet humble, leader his entire life, Justice Drowota served as president of the American Red Cross, the Nashville Rotary Club, and the Tennessee Judicial Conference; chair of the Middle Tennessee YMCA; the first chair of the Joe C. Davis YMCA Camp Widgiwagan; a member of the Board of Trustees of Montgomery Bell Academy, the Frist Foundation, and the Nashville School of Law; and an elder and deacon at Woodmont Christian Church; and

WHEREAS, an avid all-around athlete and devoted runner, he had completed the Marine Corps Marathon, and he truly lived his motto "Work hard, play hard"; and

WHEREAS, Frank Drowota was a graduate of Montgomery Bell Academy, playing halfback on its State Championship football team of 1956, and received the first Distinguished Alumnus Award ever presented by the school; and

WHEREAS, a 1960 graduate of Vanderbilt University, Justice Drowota served as an officer in the United States Navy on the USS *Shangri-La* from 1960-1962 and received his J.D. from Vanderbilt School of Law in 1965; and

WHEREAS, he was the son of Vivian Russell Drowota and Dr. Frank F. Drowota, Jr., who was the founding minister of Woodmont Christian Church in 1943 and served there until 1973; and

WHEREAS, Frank F. Drowota III is survived by his loving wife of fifty-two years, Claire Hooper Drowota; two children, Helen Drowota Close (Richard) and Dr. Frank Russell Drowota (Alison); five grandchildren, Ryland Close, Cason Close, Clay Close, Russell Drowota, and Rose Drowota; and his sister, Clare Drowota Carpenter (Bill); and

WHEREAS, Justice Drowota's positive attitude, love of life, and enthusiastic personality endeared him to his family and many friends, all of whom he cherished; and

WHEREAS, Justice Drowota was a gifted jurist who generously gave back to his community in many ways, and his life of purpose and commitment should be appropriately memorialized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we celebrate the life of Justice Frank F. Drowota III, even as we honor his memory and pay tribute to his distinguished service on the bench as a chancellor, State appellate court judge, and Tennessee Supreme Court Justice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and extend our condolences to Justice Drowota's family and many friends.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.